

PERSONNEL SECURITY STANDARDS

Problem:

At present each agency of the U.S. Government establishes its own criteria for the conduct of security investigations and the issuance of non-SCI security clearances. This independence has led to considerable variance in the requirements among agencies for access to the same information. For SCI, the DCI establishes investigative standards; however, no such universal standard exists for collateral information. There is a clear need to ensure that information of comparable levels of sensitivity is given the same level of protection in any agency. The DCI Security Committee staff was asked earlier this year by the NSC/SCC/CIWG to provide a recommended set of personnel security standards for uniform governmental use. Their actions continue in this very difficult process where investigative criteria and clearance granting authorities commingle and conflict. Progress has been slow but some consensus on historically contentious issues have been reached. In the interim, other governmental bodies, e.g., the Office of Personnel Management/Department of Defense Task Group on personnel security investigations, are solidifying positions on such standards for use in nonintelligence environments. Unless there is a national-level effort to coordinate these efforts in a timely manner, we risk increasing divergence of personnel security procedures between the Intelligence Community and the rest of the Government.

Recommendations:

That the NSC/SCC/CI or its successor:

a. Continue to be supportive of the Security Committee efforts to determine standards for the scope and conduct of security clearance investigations and processing for access to national security information throughout the Government.

b. Where no mutually satisfactory procedure now exists, for example in the case of deception detection (lie detection), establish a means to guide research and development efforts and, when developed, to certify acceptance of new equipment or methods.